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THE MERCHANT ADVENTURERS AT HAMBURG

THE imperial city of Hamburg was for nearly two hundred years the principal seaport on the continent to which the Merchant Adventurers of England traded, the mart-town in which the society stapled the great woollen manufacture of England. The relations between the Adventurers Company and the city were formally established in 1567, and with one important exception continued down to the dissolution of the society at Hamburg in the nineteenth century. During this time the Adventurers frequenting the Hamburg marts were fully organized in accordance with their constitution and charter. At first they formed a local or subsidiary court only, but later, when the religious disturbances in the Netherlands brought about the decline in trade to those parts, and a consequent increase in the Hamburg trade, the general court of the fellowship was also transferred thither. The story of the Merchant Adventurers at Hamburg is therefore of importance, first, because it affords a study of a phase of English commercial life as it worked itself out through the medium of a medieval trading fraternity; second, because it throws much light on the character and organization of the society; and third, because it witnesses the scene of its final dissolution.

The first regular commercial relations based upon mutual agreement between the Company of Merchant Adventurers and the city of Hamburg lasted over a period of ten years, from 1567 to 1577. This part of the society's history has been treated by Dr. Ehrenberg¹ in an exhaustive study which has given rise to considerable discussion.² But the much longer and more important period of the Adventurers' history at Hamburg, which began in 1611 and continued without interruption into the early part of the nineteenth century, has not been treated, except in parts by local historians of Hamburg, especially by that careful student of Hanseatic history, Dr. Lappenberg.

Of the sources that serve as a basis for the present study there are a number that have a peculiar interest. They emanate directly from the Merchant Adventurers themselves and represent a few im-

¹ Ehrenberg, *Hamburg und England im Zeitalter der Königin Elizabeth* (Jena, 1896).

² Compare *Hansische Geschichtsblätter*, 1895; *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, XV. 1-51.

portant bits from the long-sought records of the society.¹ First among these is the old Church Book² of the fellowship with entries covering the period from 1617 to 1738, though all entries for dates prior to 1717 are copied from two older registers since lost.³ This is supplemented by two other registers⁴ for the subsequent period down to 1806, the latter concluding with the following graphic entry :

1806. Charles Son of John Thornton Esqre and of Maria Elizabeth Dorothea his wife was privately baptized at Otmanchen in my No. 19. flight from the French who this day took possession of Hamburg. John Knipe.

In general the character of the contents of these three interesting volumes may be inferred from the following entry in Volume II. :

A Register of all who were Baptized or married according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England, belonging to, or under the protection of the Right Worshipfull the Company of Merchants Adventurers residing in Hamburg.

Besides the church registers there are two bundles of the society's papers in manuscript,⁵ the first containing writs and testaments, fourteen in all, made by persons associated with the court, and varying in date from 1756 to 1802. In it are also found two letters by George Thornton,⁶ from which it appears that the two

¹ The absence of all records of the Merchant Adventurers has given rise to much conjecture and earnest investigation, but with only partial success. Up to a few years ago the valuable collection of laws codified by Wheeler in 1608 and preserved in the British Museum, Addit. MS. 18913, represented the only official records of the society. To these the three church registers of the court at Hamburg, and the half-dozen treasurers' reports will form a valuable addition. For the local fellowship in the different towns, as for example, Hull, Newcastle, York, etc., records exist, although still unpublished except in the case of Newcastle, and very recently of Bristol.

² Church Book, 1617-1738, in manuscript. Hamburger Staatsarchiv, Cl. VIII., No. 9d, Vol. I., "Englisches Kirchenbuch, 1617-1738."

³ Cf. the following entry : "A Perfect Extracte of two former registers of the names of the Communicants of the English Church at Hamborough. Together with the baptismes and marriages Taken the 24 of Apriell 1620 by the Appointment of William Loe Dr. of Divinity and pastor of the said Church."

⁴ Hamburger Staatsarchiv, Cl. VIII., No. 9d, Vols. II. and III. The first entry of the third volume records the marriage of the daughter of "Mr. Governor Blacker." This volume, according to a record on the inner cover, was produced before the High Court of Chancery in England in 1818 for the examination of witnesses in the cause "between The Honorable Alfred Curzon and The Honorable Francis Curzon, Intants, by their next Friend—plaintiffs, . . . and The Honorable and The Reverend David Francis Curzon and others—defendants."

⁵ Hamburger Staatsarchiv, Engl. Court, Cl. VI., No. 2, Vol. 5, Fasc. 1, Invol. 19. The librarian's note on the acquisition and contents of the bundles is as follows : "Am 2 Juni 1876 sind von Herrn Oberstlieutenant A. D. G. Thornton dem Stadtarchive überliefert I. Ein Kirchenbuch der Ehemaligen Englischen Court . . . II. Testamente . . . III. Abrechnungen der Englischen Court über die Jahre. . . ."

⁶ George Thornton was the son of John Thornton, one of the members of the society who remained in Hamburg after the occupation of the city by the French.

bundles of papers and the old Church Book were found among his father's papers and later given by him to the library. The second bundle contains a number of interesting and very valuable annual statements by the treasurers of the company. To these records emanating directly from the society before its dissolution must be added the reports to Secretary Canning by the commission appointed at Hamburg in 1824 to investigate the circumstances of the dissolution of the factory,¹ a number of letters by the surviving members of the society at Hamburg in 1806, extracts from the protocol of the *Rath*, and the contracts between the city and the Adventurers for 1567, 1611, and 1618.

At the time of the first settlement of the Merchant Adventurers at Hamburg in 1567 the once loose organization among English "adventuring merchants" to the coasts of the continent had been gradually transformed into a close and well-organized society, with customs and practices already crystallizing. Woolen cloth in the white constituted the great staple article of their export trade from England, and for two centuries and a half, with only occasional interruptions, the fellowship enjoyed a monopoly of the export of this important manufacture to all points on the continent lying between the Somme in France and the Skaw in Denmark. In the import trade the adventurers enjoyed the fullest freedom, all varieties of goods being imported by them.² The manner and rules of their trade differed materially from the joint-stock companies of the later period, each member trading for himself and at his own risk. The company participation appears not in a joint interest in profit or loss, but rather in the rules of trade that were developed, partly to facilitate the adventures of the members, and partly to regulate the trade justly and fairly. They provided that all shipments by members be made at certain ports, at specified times, that each member observe the stint of shipping, and that the goods be placed for sale only at the quarterly marts — clearly regulations for mutual protection and advantage in times when the foreign trade was both difficult and dangerous.

¹ *Hamburgh Complaints, Copies of, and extracts from all correspondence which has taken place since 1823, between His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and His Majesty's Consul at Hamburgh, relative to Grievances complained of by British subjects resident in that city* (Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, April 20, 1835.) Among the sources unmentioned above is a folio volume of letters in manuscript in the Commerz Bibliothek at Hamburg that should be noted.

² Cf. Wheeler, *A Treatise of Commerce*, 23; *Laws, Customs and Ordinances of the Merchant Adventurers*, "Translations and Reprints," University of Pennsylvania.

To regulate the trade and the life of its members, to represent its interests with governments, princes, and cities, and to promote the trade of the individual adventurer by an effective use of corporate power against opposition and competition in the face of which, single-handed, the trader could not have succeeded at all, the society had developed a strong government. This consisted of a governor, his deputy, and twenty-four assistants, known as the court of assistants. In this court were vested the executive, administrative, and to a large degree the legislative rights and duties of the society. This court or government was located at the mart-town on the continent.¹ All matters pertaining to the fellowship in general were under its direct control. For matters of local interest, and for the government of members resident in the various towns outside the mart-town, subsidiary courts existed. These were known as associate courts, and were in most things subservient to the higher court.²

The occasion for the first settlement of the Adventurers at Hamburg arose from the insecurity of trade in the Netherlands, the dissatisfaction with Spanish rule, and the loss of trade to Hamburg when the English government refused to allow the Hanse to continue the export of woolen cloth. On March 17, 1564, the Senate of the city addressed a writing to Elizabeth expostulating against the prohibition, and offering to the Adventurers the same privileges in the matter of trade as those enjoyed by the burghers.³ After prolonged negotiations, finally accelerated by the intolerance of the Spanish in the Netherlands, which made it well-nigh impossible for the Adventurers to remain longer at Antwerp,⁴ an agreement was reached on July 19, 1567, and the society was granted its first privileges by the city of Hamburg. The grant was for ten years, and it was mutually understood that at the expiration of that period the agreement would be extended.

Owing to the violent opposition of Lübeck and the other Hanse towns, however, the privileges were not renewed in 1577. Instead was issued the Hamburg Decree, expelling the society. In 1587 intercourse was resumed, but again the opposition of the other cities proved too strong. After this the Adventurers' trade to

¹ Cf. *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, XV. 29 ff.

² The exception made in 1688 in the case of London, concerning the choice of the deputy and other officers, and the making of rules in matters of trade should be noted. British Museum, Addit. MS. 18913, fol. 200, printed in "Translations and Reprints," N. S., Vol. II. 195 ff.

³ Record Office State Papers, For. Elizabeth, Vol. 77, fol. 68. Printed by Ehrenberg, *Hamburg und England im Zeitalter der Königin Elizabeth*, appendix, 310.

⁴ Kervyn de Lettenhove, *Histoire de Flandre*, V. 75 et passim.

Germany was for a number of years irregular and erratic, without the control of a well-established residence at a great mart-town. For scarcely did they settle down at any one place before an imperial edict¹ drove them thence. Stade, it is true, furnished a temporary though unsatisfactory residence, from which trade was carried on with Hamburg through factors.² The Adventurers, therefore, looked anxiously for the time when they would again be taken up by the latter city. But not till 1611 was the hostility to the English trader sufficiently broken to make possible a successful resumption of friendly negotiations. On June 28 of that year Hamburg again made overtures to the fellowship. An agreement based on that of 1567 was reached, and the society transferred its residence to Hamburg.³ On the basis of this agreement, slightly modified in favor of their society in 1618, the Merchant Adventurers maintained their chief residence there for well-nigh two centuries. A knowledge of the privileges then obtained is therefore essential to an appreciative study of the later period of the society's history.

The contract of 1618 is drawn up in fifty-one articles,⁴ and it corresponds in general quite closely to the agreements of the earlier dates mentioned above. It is besides very similar to the privileges granted the society at different times in its other mart-towns on the continent, and may therefore serve in a general way as typical, affording an indication of the position of the Adventurers and their residence in the heart of the foreign cities in which they established their staple. How liberal and far-reaching these were will appear from the following brief analysis: By the provisions of this contract with Hamburg the Adventurers were confirmed in their possession, free of taxes, of the large stately house secured to them by the privilege of 1611, the city agreeing to keep

¹ The text of the imperial edict of 1597 is very interesting on broader historical grounds. After reviewing the history of the company's relations to the continent, and the grievances against its monopolistic dealings, it concludes, "Therefore is it that we prohibit, banish out and proscribe all the forenamed English M.M. to wit the whole Company of the M.M. Adventurers, together with their hurtful dealings, trafficks and contractings out of all the holy Empire. . . . Given in our Royale Castell at Praghe, the first day of the month of August, Anno 1597, of our Romish Kingdome the 22 yeere, of Hungarie the 25, and of Bohemia also the 22," etc. Cf. Wheeler's translation in his *Treatise of Commerce*, 80-91.

² The chief mart and residence of the society was still in the Netherlands. In 1587 it had been established at Middleburg.

³ The reasons for the removal to Hamburg and the disadvantages of Stade as a residence are clearly set forth by Mr. John Kendrick. Record Office State Papers, Dom. James I., Vol. 67, No. 80.

⁴ The English text of the contract is given in the Parliamentary Papers, cited above, *Hamburgh Complaints*, Enclosure in No. 8, Appendix F.

the building in "good repair." Within its walls they were given the right to "assemble as often as they pleased, to execute their regulations and laws, administer justice and transact all other business themselves concerning."¹ There also entire freedom of religious worship, and preaching in the English tongue was allowed the company, saving only the reservation that it be done quietly and "without giving any public scandal." The use of the city cemeteries was granted subject to the customary payments, and the Senate engaged itself to see to it that the citizens "demean themselves modestly and peaceably towards the merchants of the company and their servants," and that the ministers refrain from preaching against their religious rights and do not "asperse or stigmatize them."²

For good government among the Adventurers and in order to avoid "daily complaints," the Senate granted them the right to exercise all the privileges of their charter; of electing a governor or deputy of the company, who was to represent all the other members; to add to him others of their numbers, "either their eldest or others," who with him were to act as a government and court of law for all Englishmen, whether belonging to the company or not, judging and ruling among them according to the provisions of the royal charters to the Adventurers. Only in criminal cases of a serious nature did the city authorities interpose. In all other cases the jurisdiction³ of the court over Englishmen was complete, and to aid the society in the execution of its judgments the officers of the city were placed at the service of the court.⁴ In disputes of a civil nature between Englishmen and others (burghers or aliens), the latter had the option of bringing the case either before the preferred court of the society or before the Senate for trial. In either case, however, the judgment must be accepted as final.⁵ The contract also provided for extra consideration both for the person and goods of the Adventurer. Articles 6 and 16 protected him against all violence or molestation within the jurisdiction of the city, and secured the good services of the city in the society's behalf in case of molestation outside of its limits. Article 15 guaranteed the goods of a member against confiscation in all cases except that of high treason. He was free from arrest, and his goods safe against attachment for debt or civil misdemeanor till he was sentenced, or till the court-master had been warned of the action and an opportunity had been afforded

¹ Article 18.

² Articles 19 and 20.

³ Cf. also *Der Englischen Court-Beamte und deren Jura*, *Hamburger Staatsarchiv*, Cl. VI., No. 2, Vol. 5, Fasc. 1, Invol. 18.

⁴ Article 7.

⁵ Article 8.

to enter bail.¹ The members, on the other hand, by giving security could exercise the right of arrest and attachment, and the city bound itself not to delay speedy trial and justice.² Stolen goods belonging to members of the company and not yet alienated could be immediately recovered.³ Entire freedom was allowed the merchants to testate according to the forms and customs of England, and the inheritance of such as died intestate was to be delivered to the heirs, solely through the medium of the court-master, without any deduction.⁴

Over and above these substantial considerations in favor of the interests of the society in civil and criminal matters, there were others of even greater material advantage. These related to the tolls or customs-duties upon import and export trade, and secured to the English merchants all the rights enjoyed by the burghers, without involving them in any of the obligations of citizenship. Complete freedom of trade was granted them in all articles of trade excepting only those expressly prohibited in the agreement, in which the citizens also were not allowed to trade. The trade and exchange of commodities within the city was likewise free to the members of the society. They "shall be at liberty to sell their cloth, wares and goods whenever they please, and at any time or day (holy days excepted) as well to our citizens and inhabitants as to other aliens and outlanders of whatever people or nation they may be, and to treat in return with them for commodities they may have brought hither for sale, and consequently carry on an open trade without any difference whatsoever."⁵ A special clause of the agreement, however, limited the trading of the Adventurers in cloth entirely to the wholesale trade.⁶ Only among themselves were they at liberty to sell at retail and in small quantities. Article 24 continued the old provision of 1567 concerning the dyeing and dressing of cloth by the society. It provided that cloth was to be prepared by the members only "in such manner as is done in Frankfurth and Upper Germany." Cloth thus prepared could not be sold to aliens at Hamburg, but must be transported directly to upper Germany, Leipzig, or Frankfort. Cloth already dyed and dressed in England might be freely sold at Hamburg, and unfinished English kerseys could even be dyed and dressed there.

Detailed rules are laid down in regard to trading, commission, loading and unloading, salvage, wages, and the employment of servants, measurers, packers, porters, etc. The city engages itself

¹ Article 13.

³ Article 17.

⁵ Article 23.

² Article 12.

⁴ Article 36.

⁶ Article 25.

to do all in its power to aid the society in suppressing interlopers, and the Adventurers promise to use their influence in procuring a law "from his Britannic Majesty that no Englishman shall land any goods in any other port or on any other shore of the Elbe."¹ The company and every member thereof is exempt from ground-rent, wharfage, anchorage, or crantage.² The city undertakes to provide a sufficient number of barges, etc., and to delegate a deputation of citizens who shall endeavor to rent for the fellowship, on as moderate terms as possible, houses, inns, workshops, cellars, and warehouses. The proconsuls and senators also engaged themselves to call together the officers of the port once a year to instruct them concerning the privileges of the society.³

In addition to these exceptional advantages in trade and civil standing is another quite as important, namely, the exemption from mounting guard and garrisoning and "from all contributions for that purpose, as well as from all other civil imposts, whether real or personal, and from all other burthens and taxes,"⁴ etc.

On the basis of these remarkably favorable privileges, conferring upon them greater rights than those enjoyed even by the burghers, while at the same time relieving them of the burdens of citizenship, the Adventurers easily succeeded in arrogating to themselves complete control of the commerce between England and Hamburg. The special provision added as Article 44 to the agreement in 1618, prohibiting "citizens, inhabitants or foreigners resident here [Hamburg] or in England" from bringing from or sending to England any goods belonging to merchants of the company or to any other Englishmen, reveals the great advantage enjoyed by the Adventurers over all possible foreign rivals. Indeed the only trade with England open to the burgher and the alien was in "goods not belonging to the Company nor to Englishmen." Such restrictions must have been prohibitive, so far as their effect upon actual commerce was concerned.

Add to these advantages at Hamburg the monopoly rights secured to the Adventurers by their charters from the English Crown, and the basis for their large trade and the great wealth of the society's members⁵ becomes apparent at once. For the Hamburg residence still another circumstance contributed materially to increase its importance. The disintegration of the English trade to

¹ Article 43.

² Articles 32 and 33.

³ Article 46.

⁴ Article 21.

⁵ Too great a corporate organization must not be attributed to the Merchant Adventurers Company in matters of trade, wealth, etc. The society's wealth and influence depended entirely upon the individual members and the extent to which these contributed to its maintenance and to the carrying on of its policy and its interests.

commercial centers in the Netherlands, arising from the dangerous and unsettled conditions consequent upon the numerous wars, served to deflect the commerce of the North Sea more and more to Hamburg, that is, into the hands of the Adventurers.

What were the exact proportions of the trade with Hamburg during this period it is difficult to determine. The most satisfactory source would again be the private records of the society, especially the registers and the appointer's books. In the absence of these, the insufficient and complicated material in the shippers' lists, etc., of the port of Hamburg must serve as a starting-point. These, and other material of the same nature, Dr. Baasch,¹ and for the early period Dr. Ehrenberg,² have both worked over with much scholarly care, but unfortunately the data concerning the Merchant Adventurers' trade is very inadequate. The very fact that the members of the society were exempt from the usual customs and tolls makes the entries concerning them comparatively meager. Indeed, all through the records of the city of Hamburg relating to commerce the society figures but little. In the minutes of the *Commerz-Deputation*, which body was virtually in charge of matters of trade, the society's affairs come up for discussion only a few times during the eighteenth century. The society's commercial relations, as well as its civic relations to the city and the burghers, were clearly specified by the contract, and all its dealings were therefore with the Senate rather than with the Chamber of Commerce.

An account of the trade of the Adventurers at Hamburg, even so far as it would be possible with the data, is beyond the limits of this paper. But it should be noted that in addition to the regular staple and exchange of commodities at the quarterly marts in Hamburg, there was a well-established transit trade: the Adventurers were frequent attendants at the marts in the cities of upper Germany. A writer on Hamburg of the period says, "great quantities of all kinds of British goods go from hence to the different fairs, which are held three times every year at Frankfort on the Main, — Frankfort on the Oder, — Leipsic and Brunswic, — they are subject to a small duty on entering the town." ³

¹ Baasch, *Forschungen zur Hamburgischen Handelsgeschichte*, (Hamburg, 1902) 89. Cf. also Baasch, *Zur Geschichte des Ehrbaren Kaufmanns in Hamburg*, Hamb. Geschichts Verein, 1899. Dr. Baasch considers the probability of finding statistics on the trade of the society outside of its own records very slight. The exemption from the convoy duties paid by others shuts off what would otherwise be an excellent source. The records of the port of London should prove a fruitful source for the student of this phase of the society's history.

² Ehrenberg, *Hamburg und England im Zeitalter der Königin Elisabeth*.

³ *A Sketch of Hamburg, etc., by an English Resident* (Hamburg, 1801), 92. Cf. also Article 24 of the contract of 1618.

The center about which the life and activities of the Adventurers Society at Hamburg moved during the entire period of their residence there was the well-known "English House"¹ on the Alte Gröningerstrasse, near the heart of the old city, in the immediate vicinity of the Grimm, from which the English-Holland post left regularly on Tuesdays and Fridays. The large building with its fine façade² (No. 42, Gröningerstrasse) had been built in 1418 by the "Raths Familie von Zeven." It occupied the whole length of the Neue Gröningerstrasse, extending back the entire block to the Katherinenstrasse. A passageway through the house, much frequented, joined this street to the Alte Gröningerstrasse. In 1570 the *Rath* bought the house for 10,500 marks and handed it over, free of charge, to the society. This spacious building, with its extensive premises, the large halls, many smaller apartments, and numbers of adjoining buildings suitable for pack-houses, was admirably adapted to the needs of the society. In the middle of the building on the ground floor was a large hall, which served as the courtroom, not of the Hamburg residence only, but of the entire fellowship, adventurers from London, Newcastle, York, Hull, etc., being either there in person during the martly sessions of the court, or else represented by factors³; after the date of the removal of the chief court to Hamburg from Holland⁴ all questions of moment concerning the general affairs and policy of the society were discussed and settled by the Hamburg court. The society's relation to the politics and trade of England, the policy to be pursued toward the Empire and the Hanseatic League, the rules and government of trade, as well as the special relations with the city of Hamburg, and the government of its members—these were all matters that occupied the sessions of the court in the "English House." Not infrequently, especially during the years of civil war and dissension

¹ Many interesting facts concerning the house are found in the papers of the Hamburger Staatsarchiv, Cl. VI., No. 2, Vol. 5, Fasc. 1, Invol. 14, 15. On the basis of this material Professor H. Hitzgrath contributed a short article on "Das Englische Haus in der Gröningerstrasse und der Boselhof an der Englischen Planke" in the *Hamburger Correspondent*, 1901, Nos. 460, 461, and 464.

² Burgon in his *Life and Times of Sir Thomas Gresham*, opposite p. 321, gives a picture of the English House at Hamburg.

³ *Laves, Customs and Ordinances*, Chap. 8, fol. 155, "Translations and Reprints," N. S. II. 179 ff.

⁴ I have not come upon the exact date when the fellowship transferred the "high court" to the residence at Hamburg. As late as 1601, when Wheeler wrote his *Treatise of Commerce*, it was still at Middleburg. It is altogether probable that the removal of the Holland residence from Middleburg to Delft in 1621 marks the decline of the Dutch residence to the subservient position of a "court of associates."

in England, the court experienced stormy days.¹ In 1649 a successful attempt was made by a number of Stuart sympathizers to spirit away the court-master, Mr. Isaac Lee, and several others of the company. They were rescued off Heligoland, only after a vigorous fight, by other members of the society and some twenty soldiers hurriedly put aboard a vessel for the chase.²

On the second floor of the house, to the front, was the beautifully decorated chapel, sometimes called the "English Church," which served till 1806 as the only place in the city where services were held in English.³ The free exercise of their religion was, however, granted very reluctantly by the Senate, for on the occasion of their first settlement in Hamburg the Adventurers were enjoined under penalties against practicing the religious rites of the church.⁴ They were to partake of the sacrament according to the Lutheran fashion

¹ The residences of the Adventurers at Hamburg and Rotterdam respectively reflect in an interesting way the great struggle between the two opposing political forces at home. Long before the Civil War really began, strenuous efforts were made by both parties to secure the control of the society. Cf. the numerous entries in *Calendar of State Papers* for this period. The popular cause was successful, the irregular levies upon commerce by the first two Stuarts not being likely to secure for them the patriotic support of the Adventurers.

² The staunch support by the Adventurers of the cause of Parliament made the residences at Hamburg and Rotterdam the object of repeated attacks on the part of the Royalist agents. The details of the affair alluded to above and the events leading up to it are found in the Record Office, Hamburg Correspondence, For. 1649-1650. A spirited account is also found in Janibal's *Hamburgische Chronik*.

³ After the dissolution of the residence, the English in Hamburg remained without a suitable place of worship till the erection of the present English church. Cf. *Hamburg Complaints*, Enclosure in No. 2. The following reference is not without interest: "There is also an English Chapple near the Exchange, where an English clergyman preaches every Sunday, but it is not greatly frequented; the english on a sunday more commonly congregating in Reinville's gardens on the banks of the Elbe about two miles distant from Hamburg," *Sketch by an English Resident*, II. Another side appears in the following extract from a letter from Emanuel Mathias from Hamburg in July, 1757: "Her Royal Highness the princess Hereditary of Hesse-Cassel was last Sunday at the English Chapel, and heard the service performed by the Rev. Mr. Murray, Chaplain to the Factory; and in order to prevent any disturbance which be made on account of the great numbers of persons which gathered together for to see Her Royal Highness, a guard of six grenadiers was readily granted upon the application of the Deputy Governor of the Company and myself. . . ." Record Office State Papers, For. 1757, No. 71.

⁴ Article 14 of the contract of 1567, in Kervyn de Lettenhove, VI. 20, cites a memorial of the English at Hamburg to the home government, in which they complain of the lack of toleration and of the hostility of the Hamburg clergy: "The pastors here hate all religions save their own." On the occasion of the death of one of them during the company's first residence at Hamburg great difficulty was experienced to procure a suitable burial. The person whose death is meant, Ehrenberg suggests, was Sir Richard Clough, first governor of the fellowship at Hamburg, concerning which Clough's compatriot writes: "At Antwerp, for a time He liv'd renown'd; but ah, in Hambro' (The North country, alas that he went there!) How was the object of our love, our head, Our Forest's pride and ornament, cut down!", Burgon, *Life and Times of Sir Thomas Gresham*, II. 368.

or else abstain altogether. They were under no consideration to disturb the teachings of the Lutheran church, or attempt in any manner to spread the doctrine of Calvin or Zwingli concerning the Last Supper, or attempt any other religious innovation. Nevertheless liberty of conscience was allowed them, and they might or might not attend the Lutheran church as they saw fit.¹ These restrictions were gradually waived in practice, and in the later privileges entire freedom of worship within the House was granted the society.² During the middle period of the seventeenth century the organization of the church was apparently Presbyterian, with elders and a consistory.³ Later the form of worship became again that of the Church of England.⁴

Other parts of the English House consisted of "the houses for the governor, secretary, the housekeeper and beadle,"⁵ the chaplain, the rooms for the common tables,⁶ and the free hosts' booth for the sale to Adventurers of English beer and ale, which the society could import free of duty. Of the good cheer of the society's host there is abundant evidence. In 1674 Greflinger writes in his account of Hamburg: "Nun bin ich fast müde. Wir wollen zurück nach dem Englischen Hause da die Englische Court ist, und hier durch noch dem Wein Keller, dasselbst zuvor einen Kühlen Trunk vom Englischen Bier zu uns nehmen, und darauf in des Rath's Wein Keller."⁷

The position of the society at Hamburg was very much that of a

¹ Cf. Article 14 of the contract of 1567. The privileges are reprinted from a Latin copy in the Lübecker Staatsarchiv, Anglicana, IV. a, by Ehrenberg, *Hamburg und England*, appendix 2.

² Cf. Article 19 of the privileges of 1618.

³ Fernow, *Hamburg und England im ersten Jahre der Englischen Republik* (Hamburg, 1897), 10, note 2. In 1650 Cromwell's son-in-law, Bradshaw, who was for some years deputy at Hamburg wrote, "here be some could wish those formalities were laid aside and the power of godliness more pressed," *Sixth Report of the Hist. MSS. Comm.*, appendix, 433. Some interesting facts over a disputed election of deacons and elders at Delft are found in Br. Mus. Addit. MS. 6394, folio 48.

⁴ Compare "Englisches Kirchenbuch," No. 2 and No. 3 described above, page 266.

⁵ *Hamburg Complaints*, etc., 9; also the following in Otto Sperling's *Chronik* for January 26, 1688: "Der Courtmaster im Englischen Hause, der die ganze hiesige Englische Nation regiert, ihren Sachen vorsteht, sie in ihren differenzen richtet und vergleicht, und ein grosz Salair bekommen." In a volume of 1712 entitled *Jetzt Belebtes Hamburg* is given a list of members of the "Englische Societät," in which is the following: "Rave Emmerson, Englischer Prediger wohnet im Englischen Hause." The court-master, William Foxley, on the contrary, "Wohnet in der Catherinen Strasse."

⁶ According to John Taylor's account in 1616 all the unmarried members of the society had their meals in the House. Cf. also "Translations and Reprints," Penna. N. S. II. 98, "the tables generallye."

⁷ Georg Greflinger's *Hamburgisches Reisehandbuch und Beschreibungen von Hamburg im Jahre 1674*. Cf. *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Hamb. Geschichte*, IX. 137.

"State within a State," and their independent and exclusive attitude made the Adventurers the object of envy and dislike to numerous classes of citizens. During the first sojourn of the society at Hamburg religious differences were, as we have seen, added to others more commercial in character. For the Hamburgers did not at any time look upon the presence of the English as entirely advantageous to themselves, even from the standpoint of the city's economic interests. That there were substantial material advantages is undoubted; the customs revenues increased, many industries and interests connected with the English cloth-trade flourished; prices, rents, and the value of real estate rose with the concourse of other foreigners attracted by the English trade.¹ But over against these were the discriminating monopoly rights of the fellowship, destructive to all competition in the trade with England; the crippling of the city's cloth industry, then in its infancy; and the haughty, overbearing attitude of the English merchant. He is described as "herrische," "anmassend," and "stolz" — characteristics well calculated to arouse the dislike of the Hamburg traders, especially when the antipathy thus aroused was further emphasized by an unfriendly policy on the part of the English government.²

Complaints against the company were numerous, sometimes even threatening to bring about the abrogation of the privileges. In 1674 this hostility found expression in the "Windischgräzer Recess," the thirty-fourth article³ specifying that the Senate take steps to dissolve the contract with the English court, and regulate the "Nation" in such manner as to prevent the English from depriving the native merchant of his trade and livelihood. Nothing came of these demands, and the society continued its activities, securely entrenched behind the rights secured it by its contract.⁴

Nor does there happen to have been any serious design on the part of the Senate to set the contract aside; its terms were faithfully respected by the city despite the occasional attacks upon the society. Indeed throughout the entire period of its residence at Hamburg the society received courteous and often remarkably

¹ Ehrenberg, *Hamburg und England*, 125 ff.

² Reichard, *Die maritime Politik der Habsburger im 17^{ten} Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1867), 58 *et passim*.

³ Hamburger Staatsarchiv, Engl. Court, Cl. VI., No. 2, Vol. 5, Fasc. I, Invol. 1c.

⁴ The independent attitude of the Adventurers in regard to complaints by the burghers appears frequently. On one occasion when they were accused of selling woolen cloths at retail and of serving wine and beer to others than themselves, the court replied that it alone had jurisdiction over its members in civil matters, and if any of them had done anything worthy of punishment, the society was ready to proceed against them, as it had done on former occasions. *Ibid.*, Invol. 1d. Also *Extractus Protocolli Senatus Hamburgiensis, Martis, d. 17, 1674*.

favorable treatment at the hands of the Senate. The court-master was the guest of the city on public occasions. At the famous Matthiä-Mahl he always occupied the place of honor next the Dutch ambassador, the only guest above them being the imperial resident at Hamburg.¹ He was always addressed as "Herr," and waited upon and congratulated by a deputation from the Senate on taking office. On the occasion of the Matthiä-Mahl alluded to above, it was the duty of the youngest senator to call for the governor in a state carriage. Twice a year he was substantially remembered by the Senate with gifts of wine and beer.² On the other hand, the Hamburgers were most careful to guard against further concessions to the English. In 1696 the request of the court to be admitted into the *Commerz Deputation*, or at least to participate in its meetings when matters of interest to the society were being discussed, met with a firm refusal, notwithstanding the fact that many non-burghers were admitted.³ Nor would the conditions of the eighteenth century have justified any other course. During that period the society gradually declined⁴ till it had lost nearly all those features upon which the original grant of privileges had been made, and it is matter of surprise that the Senate did not insist on the dissolution of the agreement long before the combination of circumstances growing out of the French wars left them no other choice.

This change is strikingly apparent in the decline of the character of the society's membership. In the seventeenth century the Adventurers were a numerous, experienced, wealthy, and influential body of merchants,⁵ the foremost men of England's commerce, and in many instances leaders in her political life as well.

¹ Cf. Otto Beneke, *Hamburgische Geschichten und Denkwürdigkeiten* (Hamburg, 1856), 330.

² In the extracts "Aus alten Commerz Notizen" for 1725, *Hamburger Staatsarchiv*, Cl. VI., No. 2, Vol. V., Fasc. I, Invol. 10, occurs the following: "Was der Englische Courtmeister alle Jahr von der Stadt bekommt. Auf den 20 April, 40 Stübchen Wein. 2 Tonnen Hamburg Bier. 1 Grosse Stour. Auf den 28 Juny, 40 Stübchen Rhein Wein. 2 Tonnen Hamburg Bier. 1 Lachs. Welches der Schenk im presentirt."

³ Baasch, *Zur Geschichte des Ehrbaren Kaufmanns in Hamburg*, 33.

⁴ This appears in many ways. Of interest is the society's own statement in 1729. In that year the *Commerz Deputation* brought it about that the Adventurers were asked to pay the "Auktions-Aufgabe," a small assessment for the maintenance of the poor. The society expressed its willingness, but on the condition that the proceeds thus arising should be paid to their own poor, "since they too had many poor people of their nation then, and the court was no longer as strong as it had once been (Massen sie auch viele arme leute unter ihrer Nation hätten, und die Court jetzo so stark nicht mehr wäre als dieselbe vorhin gewesen)." *Hamburger Staatsarchiv*, Engl. Court, Cl. VI., No. 2, Vol. 5, Fasc. I, Invol. 7; also Baasch, *Forschungen zur Hamburgischen Handelsgeschichte*, III. 82.

⁵ Wheeler, *A Treatise of Commerce*, 19, 57. Cf. also *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, XV. 18 ff.

In the mart seasons these merchants, or their factors, were present in the staple town on the continent, and since Hamburg became early in the century the great emporium of the Adventurers' trade, the residence there was remarkable both for the extensive interests represented and for the character of the merchants themselves. But with the overthrow, by the Statute of 1688, of the society's exclusive right to export the great woolen manufacture, the Adventurers gradually found their trade disintegrating and much of it falling into other hands. The woolen cloth export being thrown open to all who wished to participate, and the compulsion to ship only to the mart-town or towns of the fellowship also being removed, the reason for joining the society and trading under its direction and protection no longer remained.

As a consequence the membership declined; new members are infrequent, and for most of the eighteenth century the number of members of the society residing in Hamburg is about the same year after year.¹ Only eighty-one members in all appear for the entire period from 1722 to 1806. But what is even more significant is the fact that certain family names occur very frequently; six of these account for twenty-seven out of the eighty-one names. Membership in the court seems to have become very much a matter of family, the additions to it being usually from among those entitled to the freedom by their father's right, that is, by patrimony. Admission through the long and arduous term of seven-year apprenticeship or even by the easier though more expensive way of paying the £200 demanded in the seventeenth century was apparently no longer the rule.² Honorary membership was still customary. Diplomatic agents and plenipotentiaries at Hamburg continued according to old custom to be received into the fellowship. In 1757 Philip Stanhope writes to the government, "I have lately been received with the accustomed forms an Honorary member of the Society of Merchants Adventurers here." As late as 1805 Sir Edward Thornton, minister to Lower Saxony and the Hanse towns, in a letter to Lord Mulgrave speaks of the deputation from the society to congratulate him on the occasion of his appointment and

¹ The following table by decades shows an average membership of less than twenty for the eighteenth century: — Adventurers resident in Hamburg: 1722, 20; 1732, 18; 1742, 18; 1752, 19; 1762, 18; 1772, 20; 1782, 18; 1792, 21; 1802, 17; 1806, 15. A complete list of the members of the society for this period can be worked out from the *Church Registers*, the *Hamburger Staats Kalendar*, and *Jetzt Belebtes Hamburg*. In the century before it was considerably larger. In Thurloe, *State Papers*, IV. 766, is a statement of the vote on the question of Richard Bradshaw and the deputyship, in which fifteen voted for and twenty against Bradshaw, thirty-five being present to vote.

² For the regulations governing admission to the fellowship see *The Lawes, Customes and Ordinances*, Chap. II., "Translations and Reprints," N. S. II. 34-52.

arrival, and to offer him "the freedom of their Society," which, he goes on to say, "is to be presented to me on the 29th of this month."¹ In former years the ambassador at the mart-town was usually an active member of the society, often its governor, and in that case played a very important rôle in its affairs. Among the governors² of the later period there are no men of this position.

The list for the eighteenth century contains no names corresponding to those of the earlier years when Caxton, Gresham, Clough, Bradshaw, Packe, etc., were the guiding spirits of the society. The court-master at Hamburg for this period is spoken of as deputy, not as governor—a fact of some significance for the question of the relative position of the Hamburg court for the late period. Indeed there seems to be every reason to look upon this court in a sort of twofold capacity: first, as the court of those English merchants who were members of the society residing in Hamburg, that is, a court of associates; second, as the general court of the fellowship, or court of assistants, which would meet on the occasion of the marts, and would naturally be composed of the adventurers attending the mart, regardless of their permanent residence. During the late period of the Adventurers' history, the governor of the fellowship was usually not resident abroad.

Among the chaplains³ of the court for the early seventeenth century was Thomas Young, the friend and tutor of Milton. Of the secretaries a number of persons are worthy of note. Belonging to the time a little later than Young was Samuel Misselden, the well-known writer on matters of trade for this period. Another interesting figure occupying this post was the German patriotic poet and writer, Frederick Hagedorn, secretary from 1733 to 1754, receiving for his services, his biographer tells us, a salary of £100 per annum and free lodging. The last secretary was John Coleman (1793–1807), who was also secretary to the English embassy. The names of the other servants of the residence, with a number of interesting facts as to salaries, appear in the copies of the treasurer's statements preserved in the Hamburg city library. In the report for 1793–1794, besides the chaplain and secretary, with salaries respectively of £200 and 1,200 marks, there are the beadle with salary of 600 marks, the organist with 400, the huntsman with 60,

¹ Record Office State Papers, For. Hamburg No. 28, letter of June 4, 1805.

² Hamburger Staatsarchiv, Engl. Court, Cl. VI., No. 2, Vol. 5, Fasc. 1, Invol. 2; the Church Books and the *Staats Kalendar*.

³ An interesting paper entitled "Die Capellane der Englischen Court" appeared in the *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Hamburgische Geschichte*, II. 649. Cf. also Lappenberg, *ibid.*, I. 311.

and the bellows-treader with 30 marks.¹ The salaries of the secretary and the chaplain seem to vary, the treasurer's statement made in December, 1800, debiting the former with £300 and the latter with 1,800 marks for the previous twelvemonth.

But apart altogether from these incidental facts, the treasurer's reports contain material that reveals much more of the real status of the company at that time. For a thorough analysis of any one of these this brief study would afford inadequate space. The report covering the Sinxon and Balm Marts, 1804, and the Cold and Pasche Marts, 1805,² briefly summarized, gives the following debit items: Balance from the account of Mr. John Blacker, passed treasurer, 22,035.5 marks; impositions and fees, 14,740.7 marks; bequest money, 84,402.8 marks; and interest, 5,619.7 marks; total, 126,797.11 marks. The credit items are stipends, pensions, and fees, 11,130.8 marks; charges ordinary and extraordinary, 8,145.13 marks; bequest money, 69,965 marks; balance to be paid to the Worshipful Mr. Wm. Alexr. Burrowes, p. t. treasurer, 37,556.6 marks; total, 126,797.11 marks.

The report is made by John Thornton and properly certified to by the four auditors of the fellowship. Among the "charges ordinary and extraordinary" are a number of items of interest. The rent and fees of the bowling green are 332 marks, repairs 4,413.7½ marks, and a dinner given there 1,340 marks, on which occasion the expense of 130 marks for "drummers and trumpeters" was probably also incurred. To the student of the Merchant Adventurers, however, the remarkable entry of the report is that for "William Agar, Secretary at York, a year's salary, £10." This would point to a relationship between the court at York and the court at Hamburg for a period hitherto quite unsuspected. The entry is of further importance because of the suggestion it offers in regard to records of the society at York, as also of the probability of the continuance at that place of the local organization even after the dissolution at Hamburg. A more general survey of the report reveals a marked change from the earlier commercial and political activities of the society. The absence of all indications of extensive business operations on the one hand, and the presence of numerous entries pertaining to the church and to the bowling-green on the other, serve to emphasize how changed in character the society had become since the days when large sums were expended on pleni-

¹ Hamburger Staatsarchiv, Engl. Court, Cl. VI., No. 2, Vol. V., Fasc. 1, Invol. 19. That there were numerous other servants of the society, especially for the earlier period, appears constantly. Others mentioned in a document in the Hamburg library are the court-tailor, matron, brokers, and packers. *Ibid.*, Invol. 2.

² *Ibid.*, Invol. 19.

potentiaries to the Diet of the Empire, on the reception and entertainment of guests of high standing, or contributed toward the expenses of "the Royal Navy" and "The Army in Scotland."¹

But a more active agency in the overthrow of the society at Hamburg than its own internal decay made its appearance in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Ignorant of the true state of the English company and of its affairs, and judging it chiefly by the prestige which still remained from its former greatness, the French frequently endeavored to induce the Hamburg Senate to proceed against the English society. The Senate was importuned to grant the establishment of a French company "with the same privileges as those so long enjoyed by the British Society of Merchants."² The instructions to the French agent from his government in regard to the embargo on the commerce of the Elbe in 1761 declare, "the establishing of such a company, the court of France has had in view for a long time, and for which purposes it has caused proposals to be submitted by the late M. Poussin and to be continued although without success by M. de Champeaux."³

But though the Senate could resist the diplomatic encroachments of the French government in the eighteenth century, it was soon to find itself powerless to withstand the imperative orders of Napoleon. While he was formulating for himself the plans for the destruction of British commerce, Napoleon naturally remembered the intimate relations between Hamburg and England. He believed that there were great numbers of Englishmen⁴ resident at Hamburg, and he looked upon the city as the ally of the enemy.⁵ It was therefore to be expected that he would give special attention to Hamburg. On November 19, 1806, Marshal Mortier with a body of six thousand French troops occupied the city in the name of the Emperor, and in accordance with detailed and definite instructions⁶ from Napoleon he proceeded at once against English

¹ Here again it should be remembered that some of these matters, as for example the heavy loans to the government, in all probability would not always find their way into the financial statement of the society's treasurer, since they frequently concern the Adventurers as individuals and not the company in its corporate capacity. For the relations of the Adventurers to the finances of the government see the index to the *Calendar of State Papers* for the reign of Elizabeth and the first half of the subsequent century.

² Letter from Lord Bute in answer to Mr. Mathias, July 28, 1761. Record Office State Papers, For. 1761, No. 74.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Hamburg Complaints*, Enclosure in No. 8, Appendix G. Cf. also Hitziggrath, *Hamburg und die Kontinental Sperre* (Hamburg. 1900).

⁵ In the order by the French to value and confiscate all goods at the Leipzig October "Messe" in 1806, the chief motive ascribed for the act is the fact that Leipzig was well known as one of the principal emporiums for English wares, and therefore a dangerous enemy of France. *Correspondance de Napoléon I^{er}*, XIV. 17.

⁶ *Ibid.*, XIII. 542.

commercial interests. At his express command the Senate on November 21 published an order that all British goods should be seized ; that all bankers and merchants in the possession of moneys or goods derived from English manufactures, regardless of whether they were the property of Englishmen or not, declare such in writing within twenty-four hours. To insure honest declaration a house-to-house search and military execution was threatened. Six days later, November 27, the Senate published the Berlin Decree with a number of interesting articles of its own providing for the carrying out of the decree.¹

The third article of the order decreed the arrest as prisoners of war of all Englishmen : " Every individual who is an English subject, of whatsoever state or condition he may be, who shall be found by our troops or the troops of our allies in the countries occupied by us, shall be made a prisoner of war."

Following immediately on the publication of the order of November 21,

" the houses of the different members were surrounded by military force. Several officers entered the same, sealed the offices as well as the warehouses, placed sentinels before them and brought away the following members²: Mr. Governor Blacker, Mr. John Blacker, Mr. John Thornton, Mr. George Smith, Mr. W. A. Burrowes and Mr. Secretary Coleman, conveying them on foot, under military escort, to the chief of staff, General Gaudino, who, after having identified their persons, informed them that by order of the Emperor, they were prisoners of war and as such they might expect shortly to be transported to Verdun." ³ The prisoners pro-

¹ The proclamation of the Berlin Decree with the articles appended by the Senate affords an admirable illustration of the manner in which the Continental System was introduced throughout the continent. The following is the form in which it was interpreted and given to the Hamburgers by the Senate : " PUBLICANDUM. — In pursuance of a note received by the states of Lower Saxony from his Excellency the Imperial French ambassador, the venerable and esteemed Senate is moved to make known through the present proclamation to the public for its information and observance the dispositions of the Imperial Decree of November 21 of this present year." Then follow the eleven points of the Decree declaring the British Isles in a state of blockade, etc. Signed by Napoleon.

Appended to it is the following order by the Senate, dated Hamburg, November 27, 1806 : " In pursuance of the above-mentioned regulations and order, the right worthy Rath orders as follows : 1. All burghers and inhabitants of this city must, within the space of forty-eight hours, make an accurate report of all colonial wares emanating from English colonies or belonging to Englishmen or to subjects of England. 2. All correspondence with England ceases entirely. 3. No Englishman will be permitted to come to Hamburg or to remain in Hamburg. 4. No English post and no English will be permitted to come to Hamburg or to pass in transit. 5. No vessel coming from England or having entered there shall be permitted to enter the harbor at Hamburg.

The reports ordered in the first article are to be made to the ' Herrn Inspecteur aux revues Brémond (Gröninger-Strasse, No. 66).'

² The consul, Sir Edward Thornton, together with the majority of the English, had taken the precaution to leave before the arrival of the French. Cf. the entry of the Church Register, cited above, page 266.

³ Napoleon's intention to make Verdun a sort of camp for Englishmen captured on the continent is well known.

tested, representing that they were under the immediate protection of the city and entitled by agreement to the same rights as the burghers, but all to no purpose. On the 22nd they were allowed to return to their homes on giving their word of honor to remain within the city and appear when called for. Each member however, was given a special guard who kept a strict watch over all his actions, "a measure of precaution as oppressive as it was humiliating to men of honour."¹

They were ordered to complete the inventory and declaration of their goods. An official statement was transmitted to the Senate in which the whole was valued at 420,000 marks banco — £ 35,000 sterling.

In the meantime they appealed to the Senate, by whom Syndic Van Sienen was appointed a special representative to confer with the Adventurers. But before anything was done for them the situation suddenly took a turn for the worse. General Mortier had left the city, and on December 7 his successor, General Laval, transmitted to the prisoners an order to set off on the ninth for Verdun, under military escort. Desperate efforts were made to avert this necessity. A delay in the execution of the order till the fourteenth was secured through the good offices of the French Minister, Bourienne,¹ who finally informed them "under his personal responsibility" that they might ignore the written order to depart for Verdun, and defer their journey until further orders. They were also relieved of the inconvenience of being constantly attended by a guard, and at Bourienne's suggestion applied to the Senate, "requesting them to guarantee the value of the goods contained in the warehouses belonging to the Factory" in order to induce the French authorities to remove the seals. The request was made, but the Senate was not at all anxious to grant the security. When the guaranty was finally furnished and the seals taken off the warehouses, the members were called before a committee of the Senate and obliged not only to promise to keep their goods at the disposal of the Senate as a security for the sum guaranteed, but also to furnish additional security in case the sequestered goods should prove deficient in value.

During the three months that followed the members were left in comparative tranquility. They were allowed to open their warehouses and dispose of all goods "not proved to be of English manufacture, or produce of their colonies." About the middle of

¹ Narrative of Proceedings against the Company of Merchant Adventurers of England residing in Hamburg, in consequence of the occupation of that city by the French Troops, in the year 1806. *Hamburg Complaints*, Enclosure in No. 8, appendix G.

² An article is announced by the editors of the *Revue Historique* for the November-December number on "Le rôle de Bourienne à Hambourg," by G. Servières.

July, however, Bernadotte, Prince of Ponte Corvo, succeeded to the command at Hamburg. On August 13 the members were asked by the French commissary, M. Ricard, for facts concerning, not merely the relation of the French authorities to the factory during the occupation, but also "the most material points of connexion existing between the Factory and the town." The information was promptly furnished, and all apprehension was allayed by the assurances of M. Ricard. They were greatly surprised, therefore, when on August 20, "late at night," they received an official letter from M. Ricard stating that by order of the Emperor and in conformity with the intentions of Bernadotte the members were immediately to give up the title of a British factory and break off every commercial communication or connection that might subsist amongst them; that they were to give a decisive reply, in the course of twenty-four hours; make an early application to the Senate, declaring their renunciation of the title and privileges of a British factory; and request from the Senate the publication of a decree to this effect.¹ Unable to make any resistance, they accepted the situation, and presented a memorial to the Senate on August 24 requesting that a committee be appointed to regulate their affairs. On August 29 they met in committee and submitted the form of an act of renunciation, after having received an order on the previous day from the Prince that the act must be furnished within twenty-four hours.

After much haggling with the committee of the Senate, an agreement was reached and handed to the French authorities, by whom it was returned as unsatisfactory. The same fate befell the second agreement, notwithstanding the fact that the Senate had on August 31 made public a decree accepting it as the final act of renunciation. It was returned on September 1, Bernadotte objecting to the expressions of the act that implied that the renunciation was due to orders from the Emperor. He insisted that it be made to appear as the uninfluenced wish of the factory and not as an act of compulsion. "To this humiliating step the members were obliged to consent, and the same act having been passed by the Senate in its new prescribed form on the 2d of September, it proved at last satisfactory to the French authorities."

The act of renunciation of the residence having thus been agreed to by all the parties, it still remained to settle upon the exact terms

¹ It is difficult not to suspect some understanding between the Hamburgers and the French. The Senate feared that it could not set aside the contract of its own accord without incurring the displeasure of the British government. The occupation of the French afforded an excellent opportunity to secure the desired result and at the same time to shift responsibility.

of the agreement, as well as to determine upon the standing of the old members of the society. On September 4 the latter "yielded to the pressure of circumstances" and became citizens. The final settlement of the factory's interest was not reached, however, till April 20, 1808. The agreement¹ then entered into provides in generous terms for the surviving members of the court as well as for all those associated with it as servants. "Officers and servants of the former court, and their widows not engaged in trade," are permitted "to live under the protection and jurisdiction of the city, without further arrangement, and without the payment of taxes and contributions." Surviving members of the society are exempted from all military duties and civil offices, and in all cases not expressly provided for they are to enjoy the same rights and duties as citizens. For the surrender of all claims upon the property² of the court, the Senate guarantees to pay 80,000 marks banco (about £6,000), also 23,500 marks banco to secure the reversion of the grounds of the bowling-green and the house built thereon by the society in 1770. Further, in consideration of the fact that the English House had become the property of the city by the act of renunciation in 1807, "the keys of the entrance and of the principal building having been given up," the Senate grants "that the former Court-master, Mr. Joseph Blacker, shall have his house rent free during his own life and that of his wife" or the yearly compensation of 15,000 marks. Similar provision is made for the secretary, Mr. Coleman; the beadle, Mr. Daniels; and Jean Smith, the housekeeper, 1,500 marks being guaranteed the secretary annually after he vacates the house, and 400 each to the others. And lastly on the representation of the members of the court that by the dissolution of the society "the sources from which the salaries of their attendants had hitherto been drawn were entirely cut off," the Senate engaged in the name of the city to pay from the following Easter for an indefinite time the following salaries and pensions³: the yearly salary of the former secretary, 3,000 marks; of Beadle Daniels, 600 marks; of the former bellows-blower Gurgens, 60 marks; the pension of Mrs. Ross, 400 marks; the pension of Mrs. Behin, 360 marks; the pen-

¹ Agreement between the resident members of the English Company and the Senate of Hamburg, April 20, 1808. *Hamburg Complaints*, Enclosure in No. 8, Appendix H.

² From the report of the commission concerning the factory at Hamburg, in 1824, it appears that this was in the form of obligations upon the city treasury. *Hamburg Complaints*, Enclosure No. 8.

³ By the clause immediately following the Senate reimbursed itself by stipulating that the obligation of 23,500 marks for the bowling-green should not be enforced so long as any of the pensions continued, and that the interest was to be applied on the payment of the pensions.

sion of Mrs. Hammond, 200 marks ; to the organist in full of future demands, 400 marks.

The personal property of the court was given for safe-keeping to William Burrowes, George Smith, and John Thornton. The first received the organ and books of the church, the second the library and the church plate, the third the registers and other documents.¹ Besides this there remained certain bequest moneys² bequeathed at different times to the society for the encouragement of young merchants, who were entitled to the use of them without interest.

In this manner ended an institution that had continued for centuries, at times with power and splendor, always with dignity. At Hamburg the first settlement of the society was effected in the face of the most determined opposition of the Hanse League ; the dissolution, the death-blow to its existence in the imperial city, came, as we have seen, from Napoleon. In turn the Adventurers were obliged to defend themselves against the two most formidable enemies of England's commercial ambitions. Against the former, represented chiefly by Lübeck as the leader of the Hanse interests, they were eminently successful by the beginning of the seventeenth century. Against the latter, two centuries later, they had not even the strength left to make a vigorous protest. Their organization had lost its vitality ; its methods, its policy, were those of a bygone age. The society had long ceased to be a determining factor in the commercial life of England, but like many other institutions that have outlived their usefulness, the Merchant Adventurers Society continued an uneventful existence long after its trade, its wealth, its power, and its influence had departed.

WILLIAM E. LINGELBACH.

¹ This would seem a very definite clue to the whereabouts of valuable records, but Mr. Thornton had nineteen children, and thus far only the papers in the possession of one of these, George Thornton, have been found.

² For the nature of these "Bequest Monies" see the chapter on "Bequest Monies" in *Laws, Customs and Ordinances*, "Translations and Reprints," N. S. Vol. II. 136-146. These moneys at the time of dissolution were in the hands of the following members : Joseph Blacker, the court-master, £ 1,000 sterling ; John Blacker, 1,000 ; John Thornton, 1,000 ; William Alexander Burrowes, 1,000 ; George Smith, 500 ; James Sturtevant, 1,500.